

REMARKS

Summary Of The Office Action & Formalities

Status of Claims

Claims 1-8 are all the claims pending in the application. By this Amendment, Applicant is canceling claim 6, amending claims 1, 4, and 5, and adding new claims 9 and 10. No new matter is added.

Claim to Foreign Priority

Applicant thanks the Examiner for acknowledging the claim to foreign priority and for confirming that the certified copy of the priority document was received.

Information Disclosure Statement

Applicant also thanks the Examiner for initialing the references listed on form PTO/SB/08 submitted with the Information Disclosure Statement filed on February 22, 2005.

Specification

The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because of the legal terms “said” and “means” throughout.

Applicant is amending the abstract of the disclosure to overcome this rejection.

The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: headings, i.e. “Brief Description of the Drawings” should be added to the specification.

Applicant is amending the specification to overcome this rejection.

Claim Rejections - § 112

Claims 1-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, for the reason set forth at page 2 of the Office Action.

Applicant is amending the claims to overcome this rejection.

Art Rejections

1. Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Beranger et al. (US 2002/0076271).

2. Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Beranger et al. (US 2002/0076271).

Applicant respectfully traverses.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

1. *Claims 1-7 In View Of Beranger et al. (US 2002/0076271).*

In rejecting claims 1-7 in view of Beranger et al. (US 2002/0076271), the grounds of rejection state:

Beranger et al. shows a fastener member comprising a ring 1 and hoop 2; reception means 12; fastener means 11; hook means/fastener element 220; retention means 140; rotation prevention means discussed in paragraph 11, lines 12-18; housing 143, 144; barb profile discussed in paragraph 27; lines 1-6; bushing 143; free bottom end 200; top end 21, 22; rim 21; and walls 140, 141.

Office Action at pages 2-3.

Claim 1 is amended to include the features of claim 6.

Beranger et al. clearly does not show “two opposite, vertical, longitudinal walls,” as recited in original claim 6 and amended claim 1. Rather, in Beranger et al., the flexible tabs 220 are snap-fastened under the surface 144 formed by the shoulder 143. The tabs 220 are prevented to rotate due to their sharp corners.

In the structure recited in claim 1, on the other hand, the hook means is not snap-fastened, but hooked between the two facing walls of a housing. The axial engagement of the hook means

in the respective housings provides a rotation locking, whereas the hooking of the barb profiles (352) provides an axial or transverse locking.

Therefore, the present fastener member is significantly different from that disclosed in Beranger et al. and the Examiner is kindly requested to withdraw the rejection of claim 1 and claims dependent therefrom.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

1. Claim 8 Over Beranger et al. (US 2002/0076271).

In rejecting claim 8 over Beranger et al. (US 2002/0076271), the grounds of rejection state:

Beranger et al. shows all claimed features as previously discussed, but lacks mention of the specific materials. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide the claimed materials as they are common, inexpensive, and would allow the barbs to perform the function discussed in Beranger et al.

Office Action at page 3.

Without specifically commenting on or agreeing to the grounds of rejection of claim 8, Applicant submits that this claim is allowable at least by reason of its dependency.

New Claims

For additional claim coverage merited by the scope of the invention, Applicant is adding new claims 9 and 10. Claim 9 is allowable at least by reason of its dependency. Claim 10 is allowable at least because the applied references do not show the recited “a fastener ring comprising a retention housing comprising two opposite, vertical, longitudinal walls” in combination with the other features of this claim.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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